

Message Text

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FM USDEL SECRETARY IN CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T CAIRO 2031

NODIS

CHEROKEE

FOR THE PRESIDENT FROM SECRETARY VANCE

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, EG

SUBJ: DISCUSSIONS IN EGYPT

1. MY MEETINGS IN CAIRO TODAY WITH PRES SADAT AND FORNMIN FAHY WERE IN MANY WAYS THE MIRROR IMAGE OF MY TALKS YESTERDAY IN ISRAEL. THE EXPERIENCE OF DISCUSSION THE PROBLEMS OF ME PEACE ONE DAY WITH ISRAELIS AND THE NEXT DAY WITH EGYPTIANS SHARPLY HIGHLIGHTS THE DIFFERING PERCEPTIONS, EMPHASES AND POLITICAL IMPERATIVES OF THESE TWO PRINCIPAL ANTAGONISTS AND IS A SOBER REMINDER OF THE DIFFICULTY OF THE TASK BEFORE US AS WE SEEK TO MOVE THIS AREA TOWARD PEACE. THE SUSPICION AND DISTRUST OF EACH OTHER'S INTENTIONS ARE PRFOUND AND ARE MATCHED BY AN ALMOST TOTAL INABILITY ON EACH SIDE TO UNDERSTAND THE OTHER'S POLITICAL REALITIES. WHEREAS THE ISRAELIS WANT THE PEACE PROCESS TO MOVE AT A MEASURED PACE AND FEAR BEING PRESSED TO MAKE BASIC DECISIONS TOO RAPIDLY, THE EGYPTIANS REFLECT A SENSE OF URGENCY ABOUT GETTING THE PROCESS STARTED AND HAVING EARLY, VISIBLE ACTIVITY TO POINT TO. THE ISRAELIS EMPHASIZE THE NEED FOR CONCRETE EVIDENCE OF AN EGYPTIAN COMMITMENT TO PEACEFUL AND NORMAL RELATION-

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SHIPS, INSIST THAT THEIR SECURITY REQUIRES RETENTION OF SOME OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORY AND OPPSE THE IDEA OF A SEPARATE PALESTINIAN STATE OR ANY DEALINGS WITH THE PLO. THE EGYPTIANS CONSIDER PLO PARTICIPATION IN THE NEGOTIATIONS AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A PALESTINIAN STATE THE CRUX OF THE PROBLEM, INSIST ON TOTAL RECOVERY OF TERRORITY OCCUPIED BY ISRAEL IN 1967 AND EQUATE PEACE WITH THE SIGNING OF A PEACE AGREEMENT AND

THE DETERMINATION OF BELLIGERENCY WITHOUT THE POSITIVE
ATTRIBUTES OF PEACE WHICH ISRAEL SEEKS - OPEN BORDERS,
THE EXCHANGE OF PERSONS AND GOODS, ETC.

2. IN MY TALKS WITH BOTH SADAT AND FAHMY, I COVERED IN
DETAIL THE SAME PROCEDURAL AND SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES THAT I
DISCUSSED WITH THE ISRAELIS. IT IS CLEAR THAT SADAT IS THE
STRATEGIST AND THINKS IN BROAD GENERAL TERMS WHILE
FAHMY IS THE TACTICIAN TO WHOM SADAT LEAVES QUESTIONS OF
DETAIL. WITH BOTH, HOWEVER, THE ISSUE OF THE PALESTINIANS
WAS UPPERMOST IN THEIR MINDS. IT IS CLEAR THAT THEY HAVE BEEN
GIVING CONSIDERABLE THOUGHTS TO WAYS IN WHICH THE IMPASSE
OVER PLO PARTICIPATION IN A RECONVENED GENEVA CONF MIGHT BE
OVERCOME. FAHMY HAD SEEN PLO LEADER ARAFAT EARLIER TODAY
AND TOLD ME EGYPT WAS PRESSING HIM HARD TO MODIFY THE PLO
POSITION ON RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL, FAHMY CLAIMS ARAFAT IS
PREPARED, WHEN THE PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETS IN
CAIRO MARCH 12, TO INTRODUCE MODIFICATIONS IN THE PLO CON-
VEANT WHICH PRESENTLY REJECTS THE EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL AS A
SOVEREIGN JEWISH STATE. IT REMAINS PROBLEMATIC, HOWEVER,
WHETHER FAHMY'S OPTIMISM IS JUSTIFIED. SADAT SAID HE WAS
WORKING ON THE PLO AND JORDAN TO DECLARE A FORMAL CONFED-
ERATION PRIOR TO GENEVA - A CONCEPT CLEARLY DESIGNED TO HELP
MEET ISRAEL'S CONCERN ABOUT A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN
STATE. ON OTHER ASPECTS OF A SETTLEMENT, IN ADDITION TO
INSISTING ON THE PREMACY OF THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION AND
THE NEED FOR TOTAL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL TO THE 1967 BORDERS,
SADAT SAID HE WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT ANY FORMS OF SECURITY
ARRANGEMENTS AND INTERNATIONAL GUARANTEES OF A SETTLEMENT,
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INCLUDING A US-ISRAELI MILITARY PACT. HE ALSO SAID REPEATEDLY
EGYPT WAS PREPARED FOR "PERMANET PEACE" BUT DOES NOT ENVISAGE
THIS AS INCLUDING INITIALLY DIRECT RELATIONS AND INTERACTION
WITH ISREAL WHICH HE SAYS ARE SOVEREIGN MATTERS FOR EVERY
GOVT TO DETERMINE.

3. ON THE QUESTION OF THE TIMING OF A CONFERENCE, BOTH SADAT
AND FAHMY SPOKE OF RECONVENING IN GENEVA THE NEXT MONTH
OR TWO AS TANGIBLE EVIDENCE OF PROGRESS, EVEN THOUGH THEY
RECOGNIZE NO SUBSTANTIVE RESULTS ARE POSSIBLE BEFORE THE ISRAELI
ELECTIONS. I STRESSED THAT REALISTICALLY, IT WAS DIFFICULT
TO SEE HOW GENEVA COULD RECONVENE BEFORE THE SECOND HALF
OF 1977. I HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT SADAT, AT LEAST, COULD
LIVE WITH SUCH A TIMETABLE PROVIDED THERE WAS SUFFICIENT
ON-GOING ACTIVITY OF A BILATERAL AND PREPARATORY NATURE IN
THE MEANTIME. I PRESSED FAHMY HARD ON THE QUESTION OF WHETHER
EGYPT WAS PREPARED TO GO TO GENEVA WITHOUT PRIOR CONDITIONS.
IN THE END HE SAID THAT PRVIDED THE PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION
QUESTION COULD BE REVOLVED AND THE CONFERENCE WAS CONVENED ON

THE BASIS OF RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338 EGYPT WOULD AGREE THAT NOTHING WOULD BE EXCLUDED FROM DISCUSSION AT THE CONF.

4. IN OUR DISCUSSION OF BILATERAL MATTERS, BOTH SADAT AND FAHMY WERE EFFUSIVE IN THEIR APPRECIATION FOR OUR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND IN PARTICULAR FOR YOUR APPROVAL OF THE RECENTLY ANNOUNCED \$500 MILLION IMPACT PACKAGE IN THE WAKE OF THE RECENT RIOTS. BOTH REITERATED REPETITIVELY THEIR FIRM DETERMINATION TO WORK WITH US IN THE PEACEMAKING PROCESS AND THEIR COMPLETE CONFIDENCE IN YOU. SADAT SAID AT ONE POINT: "I SHALL NEVER LET YOU DOWN". I WAS STRUCK BY THEIR OUTSPOKEN ANIMOSITY TOWARD THE SOVIETS AND THEIR DESIRE TO WORK ONLY THROUGH THE US. IN TURN, I CONVEYED TO SADAT YOUR RECOGNITION OF HIS LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE ARAB WORLD AND IN THE PEACEMAKING PROCESS. WHEN I GAVE HIM YOUR LETTER OF INVITATION TO WASHINGTON, HE WAS VISIBLY DELIGHTED AND ACCEPTED WITH ALACRITY.

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5. IN MY MEETING WITH FAHMY, AFTER EXPRESSING SATISFACTION WITH OUR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS, HE EXPRESSED CONCERN ON TWO POINTS. THE FIRST WAS WHAT HE CALLED "ISRAELI PROVOCATIONS" CITING IN PARTICULAR THE PROBLEMS RAISED BY ISRAELI DRILLING ACTIVITIES IN AMOCO CONCESSIONS IN THE GULF OF SUEZ AND INTERFERENCE WITH AMOCO OPERATIONS IN THE EASTERN PART OF THE GULF.

6. SECONDLY, FAHMY STRESSED AT LENGTH THE PROBLEM POSED FOR SADAT BY THE CUT-OFF OF SOVIET ARMS SUPPLIES, PUTTING THIS IN THE CONTEXT OF SADAT'S NEED TO RETAIN SUPPORT OF THE ARMY IF HE WAS TO PURSUE HIS PEACE POLICIES SUCCESSFULLY. FAHMY THEN SURFACED A LIST OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT WHICH EGYPT WOULD LIKE TO OBTAIN FROM US. I EXPLAINED THE STATUS OF OUR REVIEW OF ARMS TRANSFER POLICY, AND YOUR HOPE THAT OTHER STATES, INCLUDING THOSE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, WOULD WORK WITH US TO TRY TO REDUCE THE LEVEL OF ARMS SALES. AFTER SOME DISCUSSION, FAHMY AGREED NOT TO PRESENT THE LIST TO US AT THIS TIME.

7 AT THE END OF THE EVENING I HAD A PRIVATE TALK WITH SADAT. I WILL GIVE YOU MORE DETAILS LATER BUT THE MOST SIGNIFICANT THING WAS HIS STRAIGHTFORWARD COMMITMENT TO DOING ANYTHING HE COULD TO BRING ABOUT A SETTLEMENT. IN THIS REGARD HE SAID THAT HE COULD BRING THE OTHER ARABS ALONG BY VIRTUE OF HIS SUBSTANTIAL INFLUENCE WHICH HE WAS PREPARED TO USE.

8. FOLLOWING OUR MEETING, SADAT AND I HELD A JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE. SADAT EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR OUR ECONOMIC HELP AND HIS CONTINUED DETERMINATION TO WORK WITH US FOR PEACE. AT THE SAME TIME, HE TOOK THE INITIATIVE TO REFER TO THE DECISION NOT TO SELL CBU'S TO ISRAEL, WHICH HAD JUST BEEN

ANNOUNCED, CALLING THIS A "STATEMANSLIKE" DECISION. HE ALSO
ANNOUNCED PUBLICLY THAT HE HAD ACCEPTED YOUR INVITATION TO
VISIT WASHINGTON THE FIRST WEEK OF APRIL.
VANCE

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